Maldives—There are no Indian fishermen in jail in Maldives.

Sri Lanka—There are at present 30 fishermen and 37 boats as on April 9, 2003 in custody of Sri Lanka authorities.

(b) Pakistan released 280 Indian fishermen and 44 boats on February 24, 2003. They were repatriated to India on February 28, 2003.

(c) Government immediately takes up the issue of release and repatriation of Indian fishermen with the Governments of Pakistan, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh. Release is normally prompt, except in the case of Pakistan, after established procedure is followed including regular contact through diplomatic channels, confirmation of identity and gaining consular access.

Resolution in USA State Legislature about Kashmir

3640. SHRI R.P. GOENKA:
SHRI SATISH PRADHAN:
SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the State of New Hamsphire in the U.S.A. has recently adopted a resolution urging the U.S. Congress to hold hearings on Kashmir so as to facilitate a just, peaceful and rapid end to this conflict;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the present status of the resolution; and

(c) the steps taken to apprise the State legislators and also the U.S. Administration on the established facts on Kashmir?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes.

(b) In February 2003, the State Legislature of New Hampshire in the United States adopted a non-binding Concurrent Resolution requesting the United States Congress to "initiate hearings to discern all relevant facts and circumstances attendant to the Kashmiri conflict so as to facilitate its just, peaceful, and rapid resolution".

(c) Government has taken steps through its diplomatic missions in the United States and the Indian-American community to apprise the

members of the New Hampshire legislature as also law makers in the United States Congress and other state legislatures of the true facts relating to Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan's sponsorpship of cross-border terrorism. There have been no reports of similar moves in other state legislatures and the United States Congress.

U.S. request to provide airspace facilities

3641. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the U.S. Government had approached India for providing Indian airspace and other facilities to the U.S. and British forces during war against Iraq;

(b) if so, whether Government have not accepted the request;

(c) how many countries have offered assistance to U.S. to fight against Iraq;

(d) whether Government have started any initiatives to stop this war;

(e) if so, whether India have approached all the Non-Aligned nations to intervene and urge the U.S. Government to follow the United Nations advice on these issues; and

(f) if so, to what extent Government have succeeded in its role?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) No.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The United States has published the names of 48 countries as its coalition partners in the war in Iraq.

(d) Government pursued diplomatic engagement with the United States and other countries based on its principled position that while Iraq Must comply with its obligations under UN Security Council resolutions, all efforts should be made to resolve the Iraq Issue peacefully within the frame work of the United Nations. Although not a member of the UN Security Council, India expressed its position in all Open Meetings of the Security Council, including the meeting on 26 March 2003.